REMARKS

The Office Action dated March 20, 2006 has been received and carefully noted. The above amendments to the claims, and the following remarks, are submitted as a full and complete response thereto. Claims 9-18, 20-26, and 28 are pending and are submitted for consideration.

Claims 9-16, 19-23, 25, and 27 stand rejected in the Office Action under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by *Golikeri* (US Publication No. 2003/0067926). The Office Action took the position that *Golikeri* teaches each and every element recited in claims 9-16, 19-23, 25, and 27. Applicant traverses the rejection and respectfully submits that each of claims 9-16, 19-23, 25, and 27 recites subject matter that is not taught or disclosed by *Golikeri*.

Claim 9, the independent claim from which claims 10-12 depend, recites a method for improving the reliability of a computer system including a bus and plug-in units coupled thereto. The method includes providing to each of a plurality of plug-in units a separate interface circuit such that each of the plug-in units is connected to the bus via the interface circuit corresponding thereto. The method further includes addressing a respective plug-in unit, via the bus, by addressing operations directed at that respective plug-in unit and which are monitored by the interface circuit corresponding thereto. Further still, the method includes performing a time duration operation of addressing of said plug-in unit, and checking the state of addressing of the addressed plug-in unit such that (i) when the addressing is ended before expiration of a predetermined period of time,

the time duration operation of addressing is terminated and a new time duration operation of addressing is set to commence at time of next occurrence of addressing, and (ii) when the duration operation of addressing exceeds the predetermined time period, the addressing to that plug-in unit is terminated by the interface circuit corresponding thereto by sending into the bus a signal indicating termination of addressing.

Claim 13, the independent claim from which claims 14-18 depend, recites an interface circuit for providing local monitoring capability to a plug-in unit of a computer system including a bus and plug-in units coupled to the bus, wherein a separate interface circuit is provided to connect each of the plug-in units to the bus. The interface circuit includes a watchdog timer, first means for activating the watchdog timer upon start of an addressing operation directed to the plug-in unit corresponding thereto, and second means for sending into the bus a signal indicating termination of addressing, the termination of addressing being effected when the duration of the addressing exceeds a predetermined time duration for addressing, as measured by the watchdog timer.

Claim 21, the independent claim from which claims 22-26 and 28 depend, recites a computer system including a bus and plug-in units coupled thereto. The computer system includes a plurality of interface circuits and a plurality of plug-in units, each of which is connected to the bus via a separate one of the interface circuits corresponding thereto. Each of the interface circuits includes a watchdog timer, first means for activating the watchdog timer upon start of an addressing operation directed to the plug-in unit corresponding thereto, and second means for sending into the bus a signal

indicating termination of addressing, the termination of addressing being effected when the duration of the addressing exceeds a predetermined time duration for addressing, as measured by the watchdog timer.

However, Applicant submits that each of the above noted independent claims recites subject matter that is not taught or disclosed by *Golikeri*.

Golikeri teaches a distributed address database management method technique involves maintaining an address database by each of a number of interconnected modules. Each module maintains a number of locally owned address entries and a number of remotely owned address entries in an address database. Each module monitors the status of its locally owned address entries, maintains the locally owned address entries based upon the status, and provides the status to the other interconnected modules. Each module also maintains remotely owned address entries based upon the status received from the other interconnected modules. Thus, when a module adds a locally owned address entry to its address database, the module notifies the other interconnected modules, which in turn add a corresponding remotely owned address entry to their respective address databases. When a module purges a locally owned address entry from its address database, the module notifies the other interconnected modules, which in turn purge the corresponding remotely owned address entries from their respective address databases. Each module may periodically send a keep-alive message including a list of active addresses to the other interconnected modules, which maintain a persistence timer for each of the remotely owned address entries and purge a particular remotely owned

- 10 -

address entry if the corresponding persistence timer expires before receiving a keep-alive message identifying the remotely owned address entry as an active remotely owned address entry. Upon receiving a keep-alive message, a module adds a remotely owned address entry for a particular address to its address database if such a remotely owned address entry is not already maintained in the address database. A module purges all remotely owned address entries from its address database if the module is reconfigured to operate in a stand-alone mode. A module purges all remotely owned address entries associated with a particular interconnected module if that particular interconnected module is removed.

However, *Golikeri* does not teach or suggest monitoring of the addressing of a plug-in unit, as recited in each of Applicant's rejected independent claims. Conversely, *Golikeri*, at paragraph [0037], teaches that a new communication device is connected to the module maintaining the address database, and after the connection, the module maintaining the address database "learns" the new address through a sequence of address update messages sent between the devices. This method of message sending and address "learning" is distinct from Applicant's claimed invention, which recites locally monitoring the already connected device. Further, in Applicant's claimed invention, a separate interface circuit performs the local monitoring, which is also not taught or disclosed by *Golikeri*. Additionally, in *Golikeri*, the module maintaining the address database is not local, as in Applicant's claimed invention. Therefore, Applicants submit that *Golikeri* fails to teach or disclose each and every element recited in Applicant's

independent claims 9, 13, and 21. As such, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 9, 13, and 21, along with each claim depending therefrom, is respectfully requested.

Claims 17-18, 24, 26, and 28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Golikeri* in view of the *Microsoft Computer Dictionary*. The Office Action took the position that *Golikeri* teaches each and every limitation recited in claims 17-18, 24, 26, and 28, with the exception of the Compact PCI bus. However, the Office Action cited to the definition of a Compact PCI bus from the *Microsoft Computer Dictionary* and took the position that it would have been obvious for one of ordinary skill in the art to combine the teaching of the references to render the rejected claims obvious. Applicant submits that each of claims 17-18, 24, 26, and 28 recite subject matter that is not taught, shown, or otherwise suggested by the cited combination of references.

Golikeri is discussed above and the definition of the compact PCI bus from the *Microsoft Computer Dictionary* is noted. However, as noted above, *Golikeri* does not teach the local monitoring of the addressing of a plug-in unit and the separate interface circuit. The *Microsoft Computer Dictionary* also does not teach, show, or suggest these features, and therefore, Applicant submits that the *Microsoft Computer Dictionary* fails to further the teaching of *Golikeri* to the level necessary to support an obviousness rejection. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.
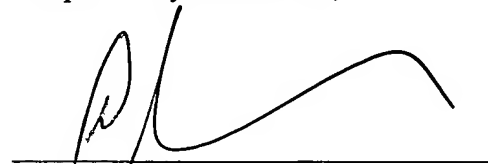
In conclusion, Applicant submits that the cited combination of references fails to teach, show, or suggest the local monitoring and the separate interface circuit recited in

each of Applicant's independent claims. Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested. Claims 9-18, 20-26, and 28 are pending and are submitted for consideration.

If for any reason the Examiner determines that the application is not now in condition for allowance, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact, by telephone, the applicant's undersigned attorney at the indicated telephone number to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this application.

In the event this paper is not being timely filed, the applicant respectfully petitions for an appropriate extension of time. Any fees for such an extension together with any additional fees may be charged to Counsel's Deposit Account 50-2222.

Respectfully submitted,

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